

I CLAIM:

1. A substantially silent movement-prevention mechanism for a ratchet,
comprising:

a first component that defines path structure;

5 a second component that is locatable in the path structure and movable
bidirectionally therein; and

wherein the path structure is constructed to include a region that prevents
movement by the second component to allow the ratchet to drive a desired fastener.

10 2. The mechanism of claim 1, wherein the first component is constructed to
define path structure with a central region that allows movement of the second
component and an outer region that prevents movement of the second component.

3. The mechanism of claim 2, wherein the path structure includes opposing
15 outer regions that prevent movement of the second component.

4. The mechanism of claim 2, wherein the path structure is constructed as
plural paths, with each path having a central region that allows movement of the second
component and an outer region that prevents movement of the second component.

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5. The mechanism of claim 3, wherein the path structure is constructed to define plural paths, with each path having a central region that allows movement of the second component and an outer region that prevents movement of the second component.

5 6. The mechanism of claim 1, wherein the second component is formed as a roller.

7. The mechanism of claim 1, wherein the second component is formed as plural rollers.

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8. The mechanism of claim 4, wherein the second component is formed as a roller.

9. The mechanism of claim 4, wherein the second component is formed as plural rollers.

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10. The mechanism of claim 5, wherein the second component is formed as a roller.

20 11. The mechanism of claim 5, wherein the second component is formed as plural rollers.

12. The mechanism of claim 9, wherein the first component is formed as first and second subcomponents that together locate the rollers in desired paths.

5 13. The mechanism of claim 11, wherein the first component is formed as first and second subcomponents that together locate the rollers in desired paths.

14. The mechanism of claim 13, wherein the first subcomponent is constructed to direct each roller to move in a desired direction.

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15. The mechanism of claim 14, wherein the first subcomponent is constructed with pairs of opposing legs that are positioned at opposing sides of each roller.

16. The mechanism of claim 2, wherein the central region includes a subregion
15 constructed to position the second component in a beginning location in the central region.

17. The mechanism of claim 16, wherein the subregion is formed as a depression in the path structure.

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18. The mechanism of claim 9, wherein the central region includes a subregion constructed to position the second component in a beginning location in the central region.

5 19. The mechanism of claim 11, wherein the central region includes a subregion constructed to position the second component in a beginning location in the central region.

20. A ratchet, comprising:

10 a handle; and

a head that is constructed with a substantially silent movement-prevention mechanism that includes a first component that defines path structure, and a second component that is locatable in the path structure and movable bidirectionally therein; and

wherein the path structure is constructed to include a region that prevents
15 movement by the second component to allow the ratchet to drive a desired fastener.

21. The ratchet of claim 20, wherein the first component is constructed to define path structure with a central region that allows movement of the second component and an outer region that prevents movement of the second component.

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22. The ratchet of claim 21, wherein the path structure includes opposing outer regions that prevent movement of the second component.

23. The ratchet of claim 21, wherein the path structure is constructed to define plural paths, with each path having a central region that allows movement of the second component and an outer region that prevents movement of the second component.

24. The ratchet of claim 22, wherein the path structure is constructed to define plural paths, with each path having a central region that allows movement of the second component and an outer region that prevents movement of the second component.

25. The ratchet of claim 20, wherein the second component is formed as a roller.

26. The ratchet of claim 20, wherein the second component is formed as plural rollers.

27. The ratchet of claim 23, wherein the second component is formed as a roller.

28. The ratchet of claim 23, wherein the second component is formed as plural rollers.

29. The ratchet of claim 24, wherein the second component is formed as a roller.

5 30. The ratchet of claim 24, wherein the second component is formed as plural rollers.

31. The ratchet of claim 28, wherein the first component is formed as first and second subcomponents that together locate the rollers in desired paths.

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32. The ratchet of claim 30, wherein the first component is formed as first and second subcomponents that together locate the rollers in desired paths.

33. The ratchet of claim 32, wherein the first subcomponent is constructed to
15 direct each roller to move in a desired direction.

34. The ratchet of claim 33, wherein the first subcomponent is constructed with pairs of opposing legs that are positioned at opposing sides of each roller.

20 35. The ratchet of claim 21, wherein the central region includes a subregion constructed to position the second component in a beginning location in the central region.

36. The ratchet of claim 35, wherein the subregion is formed as a depression in the path structure.

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37. The ratchet of claim 28, wherein the central region includes a subregion constructed to position the second component in a beginning location in the central region.

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38. The ratchet of claim 30, wherein the central region includes a subregion constructed to position the second component in a beginning location in the central region.